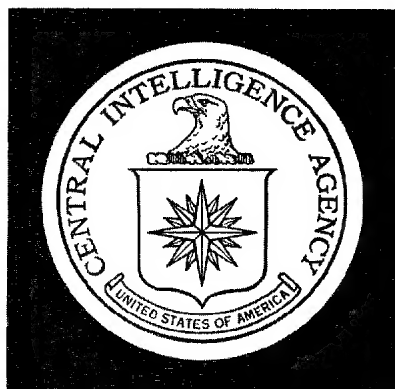


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DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

MEMORANDUM

The Situation in Vietnam

State Dept. review completed

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Information as of 1600

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HIGHLIGHTS

The Military Directorate has decided to promulgate the presidential electoral law without the controversial provision which requires that a candidate be "introduced" by at least 30 elected officials.

I. The Military Situation in South Vietnam:
No heavy fighting was reported in South Vietnam over the weekend although sporadic activity accounted for a number of friendly casualties (Paras. 1-4).

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A recent rallier reports possible sea infiltration into Binh Thuan Province (Paras. 8-9).

II. Political Developments in South Vietnam:
The Military Directorate has apparently decided to override the Provisional National Assembly's requirement in the presidential election law for the "introduction" of candidates (Para. 1). The Directorate has sent a number of recommendations to the assembly for changing several provisions of the upper house electoral law (Paras. 2-4). Presidential candidate Tran Van Huong airs his views on his candidacy and peace negotiations (Paras. 5-7).

III. Military Developments in North Vietnam:
US Navy aircraft attacked the Hanoi thermal power plant for the third time (Para. 1). Eight US planes were lost over the weekend (Para. 2).

IV. Other Communist Military Developments:
There is nothing of significance to report.

V. Communist Political Developments: There is nothing of significance to report.



I. THE MILITARY SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM

1. No heavy ground fighting was reported throughout South Vietnam over the weekend, although a number of sporadic military engagements and several guerrilla-type harassments directed against government installations accounted for a number of friendly casualties.

2. Early on 10 June, Communist forces in Pleiku Province directed approximately 120 rounds of 82-mm. mortar fire into the provincial capital during a 30-minute attack. Due to adverse weather, the terrain, and the distances involved countermortar radar was unable to locate the enemy positions and effective counterfire could not be employed. The Communist fire was directed against three US installations--an artillery group, the bivouac area of two logistical units, and the provincial headquarters--and the Truong Son Revolutionary Development Training Center. Friendly forces suffered casualties of 26 killed (two US) and 121 wounded (50 US) while the enemy reportedly suffered only three killed.

3. Allied operations reported two favorable contacts with VC/NVA forces over the weekend. In the upper Mekong Province of Long An, a US infantry company participating in Operation ENTERPRISE engaged an estimated reinforced enemy platoon on 10 June. In a subsequent series of contacts, US forces succeeded in killing 42 of the enemy without suffering a single casualty. Also, on 10 June ARVN forces commenced Operation CUU LONG 65 in Dinh Tuong Province south of Long An. Initial reports from that operation indicate that the South Vietnamese forces killed 45 of the enemy and captured 12 weapons while suffering only four killed and 26 wounded.

Operation AKRON Begins

4. On 9 June, US and ARVN forces initiated Operation AKRON, a clearing operation in an area covering portions of Bien Hoa, Long Khanh, and Phuoc Tuy provinces. The primary objective of the operation

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is the neutralization of the Hot Dich - Phuoc Chi base area. Concurrent with a search for the estimated 1,400 Communist forces reportedly in the area, security will be provided for jungle clearing operations. Units participating in the operation include elements of the US 1st Brigade/9th Infantry Division and 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, and one ARVN ranger battalion. As of 11 June, no significant enemy contact had been reported.

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25X1 8. [redacted] who rallied on 23 May in Binh Thuan Province indicated that the Viet Cong in Binh Thuan were expecting to receive supplies via sea infiltration. Although the rallier was unable to provide any estimate of when such infiltration would occur, he stated that the supplies--small arms and mortars--would be off-loaded in the vicinity of the Le Hong Phong "Secret Zone" and would be used to rearm the 482nd Battalion and two local force companies. In addition, the rallier claimed that this was to be the first effort to resupply Viet Cong forces in Binh Thuan by sea and that in the past all arms had been transported overland through Lam Dong Province.

25X1 9. In view of recent Communist efforts to secure their overland infiltration route, primarily [redacted] [redacted] the expansion of their control in Lam Dong Province, it seems unlikely that they would risk sea infiltration when the overland routes appear to be satisfying their supply requirements. Recent increased enemy activity in Binh Thuan appears to indicate that the Communists are not hard pressed for supplies.

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II. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTH VIETNAM

1. According to a report from the US Embassy in Saigon, the Military Directorate, following a 9 June meeting, has decided to promulgate the presidential electoral law without Article 10 (7), the controversial provision which requires that a candidate be "introduced" by at least 30 elected officials. By this action, the Directorate will, in effect, override the Provisional National Assembly's (PNA) previous vote in favor of this measure, and may, as a result, cause further strains to develop between the two bodies.

2. Also as a result of the 9 June meeting, the Directorate in a strongly worded message formally asked the PNA to make several changes in the upper house electoral law which is currently under consideration in that body. Chief among the Directorate's recommendations to the PNA was that the upper house elections be held concurrently with the presidential election now set for 3 September and not in December as presently scheduled. A second change recommended in law was that voters be allowed to cast a ballot for all six lists of candidates rather than only one. This recommendation

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went against Premier Ky's strong argument in favor of allowing voters to cast their ballots for two lists of candidates.

3. The Directorate's third recommendation to the PNA called for the revision of the amendment which deals with the elimination of upper house candidates who are either Communists or pro-Communist neutralists. As the amendment now stands, only candidates who are adjudged to belong to either of the two categories will be stricken from the list while their running mates and qualified alternates will be allowed to run. The Directorate's request calls for the elimination of the entire slate if any member is found to be a Communist or pro-Communist neutralist.

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The Directorate's message to the assembly also included the suggestion, but not the formal request, that the size of the upper house be reduced from its present proposed membership of 60 to 40.

4. In order to provide sufficient time for the establishment of the machinery for the upper house election, the assembly will have to make some haste in passing the upper chamber electoral law especially if it intends to incorporate the Directorate's recommendations in it.

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[redacted] from three to three-and one-half months are needed to set up the machinery for such an election. Therefore, if the law is promulgated by 15 June there will be enough time to complete arrangements for compliance with the Directorate's requested 3 September deadline.

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Tran Van Huong Views His Candidacy and Peace

5. Presidential candidate Tran Van Huong in a recent conversation [redacted] indicated that he feels he does not need a political party to win the forthcoming presidential election. According to Huong, the Vietnamese are politically unsophisticated and do not cast a ballot on the basis of the issues but rather on the basis of the fame and prominence of the candidate.

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6. Huong maintained that it would be "impossible" for him to make any deals with a military candidate. While he advanced several reasons for this assertion, the overriding one seemed to be that he wants to be president and that any lesser position would not suit him. He also stated that it would be impossible for him to make any deals with civilian candidates, as it would be "unethical" for him to ask others to withdraw their candidacy and he would

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not attempt to buy them off. Huong was emphatic in stating that he had not promised a position in his government to any other candidate in order to gain that candidate's support.

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7. On the issue of bringing peace to Vietnam, Huong stated his belief that ending the war is primarily a Vietnamese concern and that any settlement must be negotiated between Saigon and Hanoi. Huong said that in recent months talks regarding that settlement of the Vietnamese problem have mainly been a dialogue between the US and North Vietnam--an approach which he considers invalid. He feels that the principal US role in any peace talks should be to support the negotiations of the GVN, although he did not object to US participation in such talks. Huong rejects as unrealistic any effort of the United Nations to settle the Vietnamese problem.

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III. MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS IN NORTH VIETNAM

1. Carrier-based US Navy planes employing television guided missiles struck the Hanoi thermal power plant for the third time in as many weeks on 10 June. A preliminary review of [REDACTED] the raid indicated apparent damage at the junction of the three boiler houses and the generator hall, although the quality of the photography precluded detailed interpretation of the extent of damage. Strike pilots reported that their missiles were delivered on target and were observed to guide and explode on or inside the face of the generator hall.

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2. The power plant strike was part of a three-carrier-coordinated raid which also included as targets supply depots in the Hanoi area. Pilots on the raids reported intense surface-to-air missile (SAM) and anti-aircraft fire which accounted for the loss of an F-8 Crusader and an A-4E Skyhawk. Six additional US planes were lost over the weekend to a mix of anti-aircraft and SAM fire, and several MIG engagements were also reported with no losses counted on either side.

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